



WIRELESS EBT PROJECT

December 2015 Newsletter



From the Editor – Tracy Penick

Month	EBT Transactions	Debit/Credit Transactions	Total Transactions	EBT Sales	Debit/Credit Sales	Total Sales
January	31	299	330	\$1,340.73	\$14,917.92	\$16,258.65
February	30	276	306	\$803.02	\$18,751.58	\$19,554.60
March	50	626	676	\$988.73	\$18,657.83	\$19,646.56
April	55	718	773	\$1,488.58	\$26,719.09	\$28,207.67
May	318	5570	5888	\$5,769.39	\$193,112.69	\$198,882.08
June	442	6027	6469	\$4,674.89	\$152,319.94	\$156,994.83
July	821	5239	6060	\$8,337.80	\$94,212.18	\$102,549.98
August	993	5969	6962	\$10,880.99	\$111,654.60	\$122,535.59
September	786	7902	8688	\$9,818.27	\$180,869.01	\$190,687.28
October	603	13727	14330	\$8,211.04	\$345,215.95	\$353,426.99
November	66	2187	2253	\$2,062.97	\$68,305.32	\$70,368.29
Total for Year	4,195	48,540	52,735	\$54,376.41	\$1,224,736.11	\$1,279,112.52

November 2015 Facts:

Total sales have topped last year's sales with still one month to go. This is awesome! I can't say enough how much I appreciate your dedication to the Wireless EBT Project. Because of you, Iowa's Food Assistance families have access to the freshest food available. Thanks so much!

Total sales for November this year were higher than November 2014 (\$70,368.29 compared to \$62,317.90). The number of EBT transactions were lower in 2015 than in 2014 (66 compared to 88). For November 2015, there were a total of 2,253 wireless transactions compared to 1,910 in 2014.

In November 2015, there were 179,639 Food Assistance/EBT families in Iowa. \$42,773,387 in benefits were issued in November to these families.

Here are other interesting facts regarding November sales:

There were 60 farmers who were active in November and 24 of those had EBT sales. The farmers with the highest EBT transactions were:

- ❖ Hoffman Produce Farm – Waterloo
- ❖ Hollow Maple Farm - Bennett
- ❖ Grossman Meats - Preston
- ❖ Iowa Food Coop – Des Moines
- ❖ Oak Hill Acres - Atalissa

Visiting Farmers Markets

I had the opportunity to stop by the second Downtown Des Moines Winter Market on Friday, December 18th. Several farmers that participate in the Wireless EBT Project were vending at this indoor market. Still surprised at how much fresh produce was still available. A lot of people were finishing up their Christmas shopping.



Becki & Sean Sullivan
Juan O'Sullivan's Gourmet Salsa

2016 Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Growers Annual Conference

The annual Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Growers Conference will be held on January 28 and 29 at the FFA Enrichment Center on the DMACC Campus in Ankeny.

The keynote speaker on Thursday will be Ryan Albers. Ryan is the Ag Underwriting Governance Director at Farm Bureau Financial Services. Ryan will talk about Ag Risk Management and Insurance and how it affects farm businesses.

On Friday, the keynote speaker will be Tim Vala with Vala's Pumpkin Patch. Tim will share his story of success and how he transitioned his farm into one of the premier fall destinations in the US.

The link to sign up for this worthwhile conference is listed below.

http://www.ifvga.org/index.cfm/51266/67291/2016_iowa_fruit_and_vegetable_growers_annual_conference

Update information with the USDA

Just a reminder that it is extremely important to report any changes to the USDA. The USDA is who authorized you to accept EBT. If you have a name change or an address change it needs to be reported so that your authorization is up to date. If you have a change, please call 312-353-6609 to report the change.

Changes to your contact information?

It is very important that DHS has your current e-mail addresses and your correct phone numbers. I send out a lot of important information and if DHS does not have your current information you could be missing out on important information. Please make sure that if you change your e-mail address or you drop or pick up a new phone number that you share that information with me.

Upcoming Events

Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference – January 28 & 29 at the FFA Enrichment Center on the DMACC Campus in Ankeny.

Iowa Farmers Market Association Workshop – February 6 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Location is at the Polk County Westside Community Center located at 132 6th Street, West Des Moines (Valley Junction).

Paper for your wireless machine

Just a reminder that DHS supplies the paper rolls for your wireless machines. It is imperative that you use thermal paper or it could ruin your machine. Please do not use any other type of paper in your wireless machine other than the paper that DHS supplies. If you are running low on paper, please give me a call.

Reminders:

1. Remember that you cannot ring up a sale for another vendor. You could lose your Food Stamp certification and be terminated from the Wireless Project.
2. Since you are paying for the commercial transaction fees, be sure to keep track of what you are paying so you can use those expenses as a tax deduction.
3. You cannot set a minimum purchase amount. If an EBT household wishes to purchase \$.50 in onions, you do need to process the transaction. Same for any debit or credit transaction.
4. Hot foods and hot drinks (cocoa, coffee, and tea) cannot be purchased with SNAP EBT benefits.
5. If you experience issues with your FD 410 machine, please call Technical Support at 1-877-274-7915. You will need to supply your Merchant Identification number. If you can't get the problem solved, please call Tracy.
6. Call Tracy if you need any supplies such as paper rolls, power cords, or battery.
7. Charge your batteries before market. You should always have a charged battery, ready to go for market. If a battery is not holding a charge, contact Tracy for a replacement.

Help Desk

We are here to help you!

When you have questions about:

- Participating in the Wireless project or reimbursement questions? Call Tracy Penick at 515-281-4935.
- What you can sell to EBT customers, or being authorized to accept EBT? Call USDA/FNS at 877-823-4369.
- Food Assistance eligibility? Call Kari Lind at 515-281-7000.
- Supplies – call Tracy Penick at (515) 281-4935.